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# REAR AREA SUPPORT OF MISSILE TROOPS IN FRONT OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS

by Colonel General of Artillery

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As is known, timely and thorough rear area supply of missile troops is the most important condition for achieving success in an operation. But the recently adopted system for supplying missiles and missile fuel to troops does not yet completely fit the nature of modern operations. It requires further improvement. From this point of view the article by Lieutenant General M. Novikov is of great and practical interest, and the questions upon which it touched required the most serious attention.

It is difficult, however, to agree with the author's assertion that under present-day conditions the principal organizer of the supply of troops with missiles and .....

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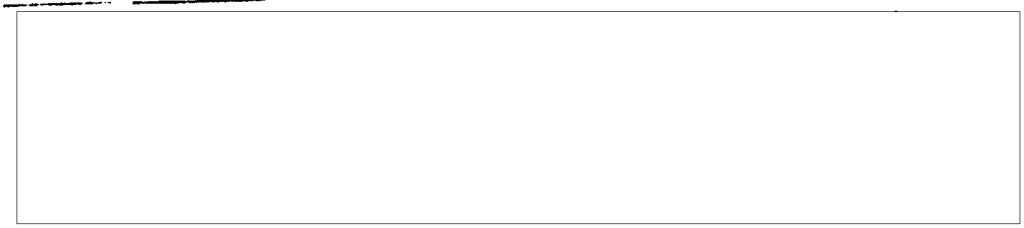
The experience of having service of artillery armament subordinate to the deputy commander of troops for the rear area did not prove itself during World War II when the conditions and volume of rear area work were considerably simpler. And it is doubtful that such subordination will be acceptable under present-day conditions. The resubordination (perepodchineniye) of the *service of missile and artillery armament not only increases the volume of work of the rear area chief, but also requires the rear area staff to spend considerable time coordinating both the very important and the routine problems with the directorate or department of missile and artillery armament, the HQ of missile troops and artillery, and also with the departments of the PVO troops of the front (army). It is difficult at this time to state whether it is expedient to have the service of missile and artillery

* sluzhba raketnogo i artilleriyskogo vooruzheniya



armament subordinate to the chief of missile troops and artillery, even though such subordination was completely justified in the years of World War II. At that time all of the field and anti-aircraft artillery was under the commander of artillery. He organized the combat activity of all artillery, and only he was able to direct the work of the service of artillery armament.

At the present time only units (chast) and large units (soyedineniye) of tactical and operational-tactical missiles, as well as units and large units of field artillery, are subordinate to the chief of missile troops and artillery. Antiaircraft weapons (antiaircraft artillery, troop and army missiles of the class "surface-air") have gone over to the control of the chief of PVO troops of the front (army). The dual control of the combat activity of missile troops and artillery leaves its mark on the conditions of work of the service of missile and artillery armament. It is compelled to execute the instructions and requirements of two chiefs: the chief of missile troops and artillery and the chief of PVO troops. Besides this, the further equipping of combined arms large units and operational groupings (obedineniye) with tanks increased significantly the need for tank ammunition, the expenditure of which is planned and determined to some extent by the staff of the front (army). Consequently, the service of missile armament also has to coordinate its activities with the staff of the front (army). In essence, therefore, three senior officers have an influence on the work of the service of missile and artillery armament in the resolution of basic problems. This is obviously an abnormal situation. In order to eliminate it, it is advisable to transfer the subordination of the service of missile and artillery armament directly to the commander of troops of a front (army).

To some extent this proposal evolves from the real interrelationship of the chief of service with the staff and the commander of troops of a front, since he very frequently is the chief advisor to the command on questions of supplying troops with nuclear weapons and missiles of all types. Also, this proposed resubordination of service brings it nearer to those elements of control where the basic questions of the combat employment of missile troops and other arms of service are decided.

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Let us examine some of the author's personal proposals.

The complex utilization of rail, road, and air transport in the operational rear area undoubtedly is necessary, but the possibilities of using them for missile troops are extremely limited. As can be seen in Diagram 1, missiles, component parts, (komplektuyushcheye imushchestvo) and nose sections (golovnaya chast) are delivered from the zone of interior (tyl strany) to the rear area missile bases of the front principally by rail and air. The principal organizer of the loading and dispatch of this freight is the Chief Artillery Directorate and the 12th Chief Directorate of the Ministry of Defense. The responsibilities of the front rear area are limited to dispatching these transports, upon arrival, to the various front rear area missile bases or their sections (otdeleniye). It is unlikely that missiles will be transported within the front area by rail under the existing system of supply because of the extremely limited number of rear area missile installations (uchrezhdeniye) capable of handling missile components and because of the comparatively slow pace of reconstruction of rail lines behind the advancing troops. Besides this, transportation within the front area is also limited, to a certain extent, by the lack of an adequate number of temperature-controlled (izotermicheskiy) railroad cars, specially equipped railroad cars, and gondola cars (poluvagon) at the front.

In the operational rear area the basic method of supplying troops most of the missiles which have undergone preliminary technical preparation is by special cross-country carriers (gruntovaya telezhka) and not just automotive transport. It is practically impossible to use them for other purposes, just as it is not possible in practice to use truck motor pools for transporting missiles. That is why the author's proposal of giving the chief of the rear area the responsibility of transporting missiles to the troops by complex utilization of the transport in the front rear area is impractical; for it does not reflect true capabilities and is not supported from the materiel viewpoint. The only other means that the chief of the rear area will be able to use for transporting missiles is helicopters. But up to the present time they are still considered as resources of the commander of troops of a front and of an army.

We come to the same conclusions when we analyze the conditions for transporting special fuel and for fueling missiles. It is known that the fueling of missiles is carried out in preliminary preparation areas by forces of the front rear area missile bases. At these preliminary preparation areas the fueling facilities are used both for the transporting of missile fuel and for the fueling of missiles. These same fueling facilities are incorporated in the plan of service of missile and artillery armament for transporting missile fuel elements from the depots of the front. Therefore the principal of function of the service of supply of fuel must be the [one word missing] development of depots and ....

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.... armament, and no other should be responsible for the organization of the delivery of missiles.

The correct deployment and timely movement of rear area missile units of the front and army depend not only on the prepared network of railroad lines and military roads, but also on the groupings of missile troops and on their combat operations. The timely movement of troops is determined by the front troop commander with the active participation of the chief of missile troops and artillery, as well as by the chief of PVO troops. It is evident that these chiefs will not be inactive regarding the deployment and movement of the missile bases of the front rear area. Their thoughts on this subject will be more sound than the proposals of the chief of the rear area. We do not deny the need for a close working relationship among all the above-mentioned senior officers, but we do not see the need to levy this responsibility on the chief of the rear area. The last word concerning this matter will obviously belong to the commander of the troops of a front (army). There is even less need to include the rear area apparatus in the planning of supplying the troops with missiles, when the matters being decided relate not only to the work of rear area missile installations but also to the feasibility of using the transport equipment of units for delivery of missiles. The latter depends, basically, on the missions of the missile units. In other words, the feasibility of using troop transport for delivery of missiles depends on the times of their launching. It appears to us that it is in the interests of this matter to have constant contact between the chief of the rear area



and the chief of missile and artillery armament. Regarding coordination, the directorate of missile and artillery armament is required to coordinate with the rear area staff and with the fuel supply service: the areas where front rear area missile bases and missile fuel depots are to be set up; the distribution of the missile fuel received to its destinations; and, the time required to establish *OSG depots and the road network at the front. Under the circumstances the chief of the rear area, although not responsible for supplying the troops with missiles, must give all possible assistance to the service of missile and artillery armament.

We fully share Lt. Gen. M. Novikov's opinion that the new system of supplying troops with missiles has a number of serious shortcomings. In our opinion, to these shortcomings should be added: the narrow specialization of the rear area missile bases of the front and their inadequate ability to withstand enemy action; the difficulty in organizing nose section crews (otdeleniye); the comparatively great distances over which ready (gotovaya) missiles have to be transported; and the difficulty of relocating bases.

According to the data from the troop exercise "Don" the new system provides that each front have one front technical missile base and one front technical ZUR base (Diagram 1). The front technical missile base, which is intended for the preparation of tactical and operational-tactical missiles, includes one transport battalion (parkovyy divizion), one technical, and several mobile technical repair bases. The front technical ZUR base is intended for the preparation of antiaircraft missiles and may be composed of one or two transport battalions and three or four technical battalions. From the front missile bases it is possible to detach two nose section crews comprising a very small personnel force (from the FRTB -- one mobile technical repair base and a transport and technical battery; from the FTB ZUR -- a technical battalion and several transport batteries (batareya).) Because of this, even during a period of preparation for an operation, all missile troops operating in a zone of 150-200 km are obliged to depend on each nose section crew of the rear area base: during the operation all missile troops of a front must depend on each nose section crew of the rear area base. The distances that ready missiles must be transported during different periods of an

* OSG - possibly otdeleniye spetsialnogo goryuchego - special fuel section

operation may be 150-200 km, or more. The transporting of ready missiles over such great distances adversely affects their reliability. While retaining the concept of centralized preparation of missiles, it is more advantageous to have two bases with a broad profile but capable of preparing all types of missiles (see Diagram 2), instead of two specialized bases. In this way the distances of transport are reduced by two times and the stability of work at the bases is increased. By organizing the rear area missile bases in this manner, if one directorate of the base is put out of commission it will not affect the work of all sections. In order to reduce the distances that ready missiles are transported and in order to increase the maneuverability of the bases, it is advisable that each base, instead of having specialized sub-units (podrazdeleniye), have small complex rear area installations designed to receive, to relocate, to carry out the preliminary preparation of missiles, and to bring the nose section components (golovnaya chast) to the final stage of readiness. We propose that each rear area missile base have at least two installations for the preparation of operational-tactical missiles and the nose sections of tactical missiles, and also two or three installations for the preparation of army antiaircraft missiles. In our opinion, the proposed organizational structure of the rear area missile bases removes, to a certain extent, the shortcomings of existing bases and insures a wide dispersal of missile resources at all levels of supply. Besides this, it sharply reduces transportation distances, increases maneuverability, simplifies the organization of redeployment, and also increases the stability of the entire system of supplying troops with missiles.

In our opinion, an offensive operation can be started when the missile resources of the front reach 70 - 80 percent of its requirements. The remaining missiles can be on their way to the rear area of the front. Also, it is definitely more advantageous that the troops have in their possession a considerable portion of the missile resources. However, Lt. Gen. M. Novikov's proposal that at least 50 percent of the missiles required for an operation be delivered to the troops before initiating an operation is apparently not altogether correct. This proposal is applicable to a certain extent for tactical and operational-tactical missiles, when the transport capabilities of troop units are fully commensurate with the existing rates of expenditure. Antiaircraft missiles,

especially those of the army, are expended in much larger quantities than missiles of the surface-to-surface class. Therefore it is doubtful that it will be possible to supply the antiaircraft missile units with 50 percent of the missiles required for the operation in advance of the operation, because the transport facilities of the units are not calculated to handle so great a volume of freight. We think that it would be best to create supplies in the units adequate for two days' needs. Such supplies will become the norms for the mobile reserves of the missile units. The amount calculated for one launching installation (puskovaya ustanovka) may be:

-- Tactical and operational-tactical -- three missiles;

-- Troop antiaircraft (voyskovaya zenitnaya) -- six missiles;

-- Troop army (voyskovaya armeyskaya) -- eight missiles.

Lt. Gen. M. Novikov proposes that small mobile sub-units for storing and transporting missiles be added to the rear of motorized rifle and tank divisions. But why burden the rear of a division if the division will get not more than four to six tactical missiles for the entire operation. The rate of use will be somewhat higher in an antiaircraft missile battalion, but through the joint efforts of the missile and army transport battalions if will be possible to supplement the supply successfully. The addition of a small missile delivery and storage sub-unit to the division rear at once necessitates the addition of at least one lifting crane for trans-loading missiles, and teams to make adjustments (reglamentnaya rabota) on the missile and nuclear nose section. It is clear that this will not increase the maneuverability of the division rear.

Having stated our proposals, we would like to note that the questions mentioned in the article by Lt. Gen. M. Novikov need further serious study, consideration, and testing in troop field exercises.

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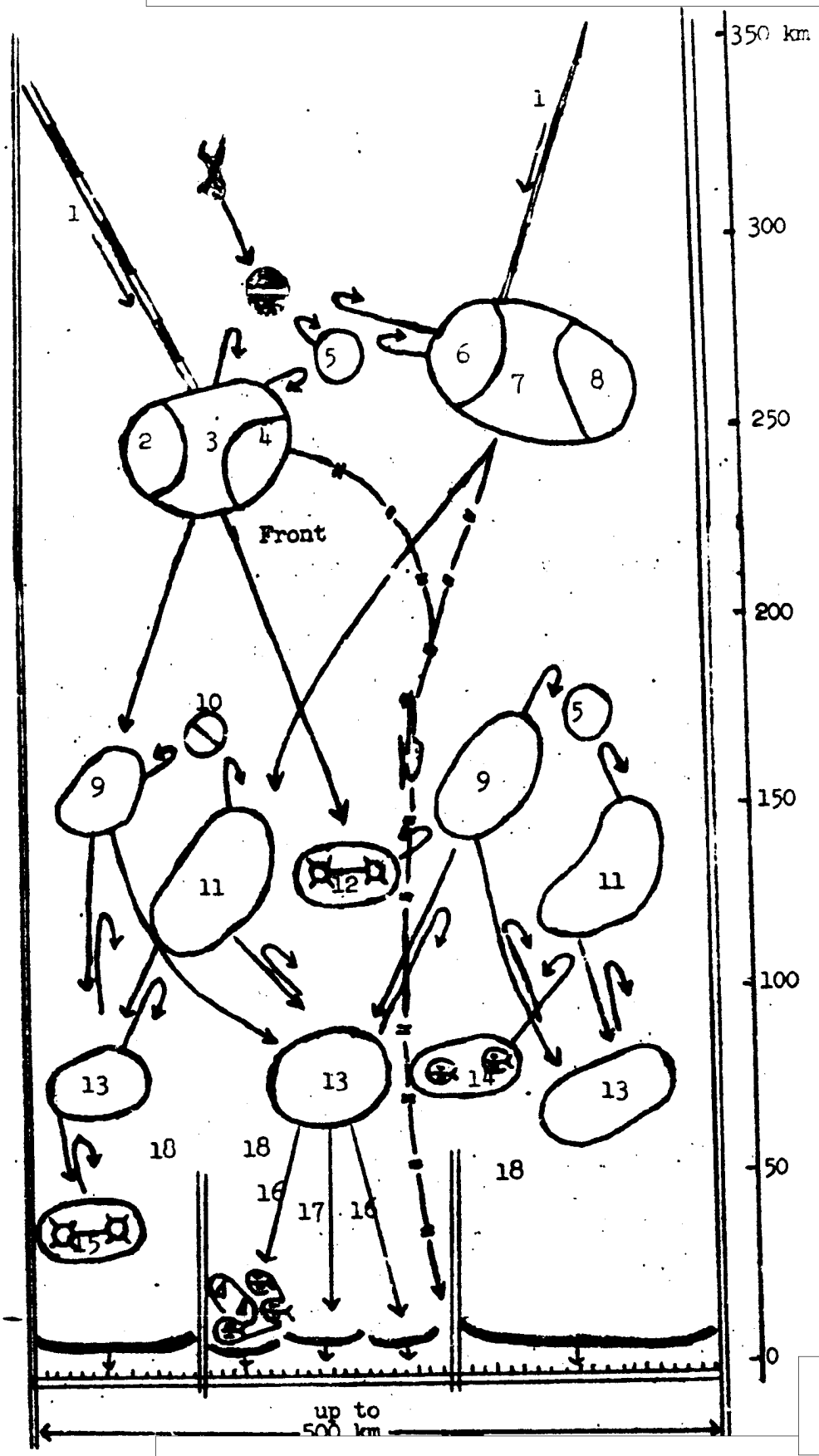


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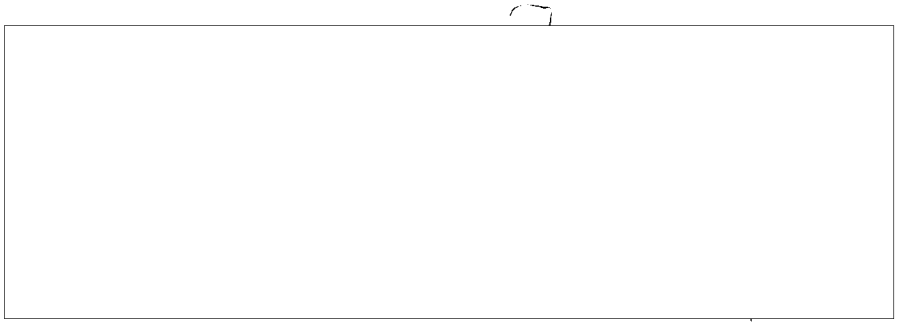
Diagram 1*

Support of Troops of a Front with Missiles According to Data of Exercise "Don"

1. Iz tyla strany -- From the zone of interior
2. Parkovyy divizion -- Transport battalion
3. FRTB -- Frontovaya raketnaya tekhnicheskaya baza -- Front missile technical base
4. Tekhnicheskiy divizion iz 4 PRTB* -- Technical battalion of 4 mobile repair -- technical batteries (podvizhnaya remontnaya tekhnicheskaya batareya)
5. FSRT* -- Frontovoy sklad raketnogo topliva -- Front storage area for missile fuel
6. Tekhnicheskiye diviziony -- Technical battalions
7. FTB ZUR -- Frontovaya tekhnicheskaya baza Zenitnykh upravlyayemykh raket -- Front technical base for surface-to-air missiles
8. Puskovyye diviziony -- Launching battalions
9. Otdeleniye FRTB -- Section of the FRTB
10. Otdeleniye FSRT - Section of the FSRT
11. Otdeleniye FTB ZUR -- Section of the FTB ZUR
12. frbr* -- frontovaya brigada -- Front brigade
13. Armeyskiy parkovyy divizion -- Army transport battalion
14. fzenrap* -- frontovoy zenitnyy raketnyy i artilleriyskiy polk -- Front antiaircraft missile and artillery regiment
15. arbr* -- armeyskaya brigada -- Army brigade



16. msd -- motostrelkovaya diviziya -- Motorized rifle division

17. td -- tankovaya diviziya -- Tank division

18. Armiya -- army

* Abbreviations which are marked above with an asterisk were not expanded in the text of the article.

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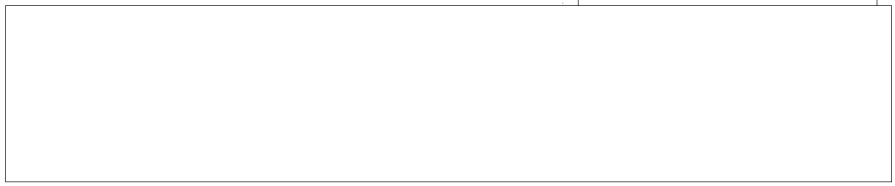

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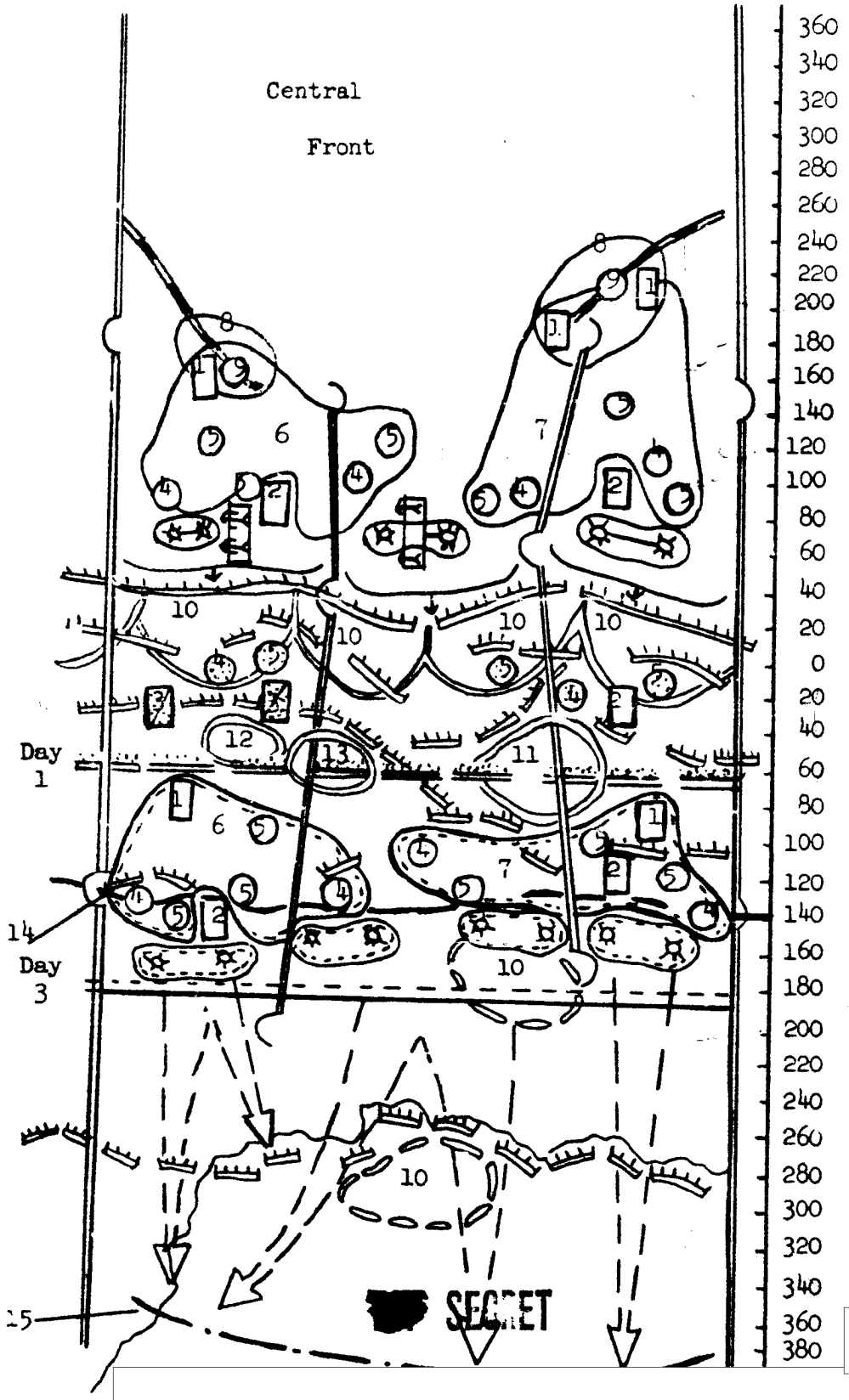


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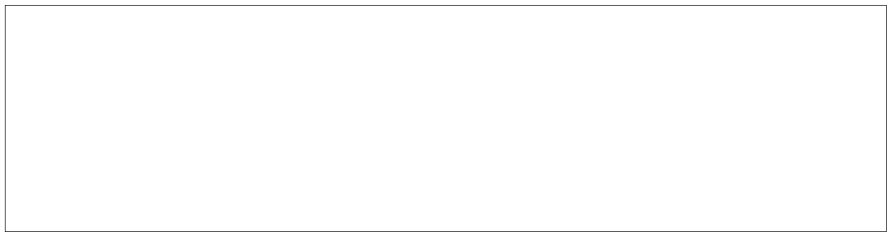

Diagram 2*

Suggested Variation for Deployment and Movement of Rear Area Missile Units of a Front and Army in an Offensive Operation

Conventional Signs

1. FSR -- Frontovoy sklad raket -- Front missile warehouse
2. APD -- Armeyskiy parkovyy divizion -- Army transport battalion
3. Golovnoye otdeleniye APD -- Nose cone section of the APD
4. NR -- Sborochn. tsentr nazemnykh raket -- Assembly center for surface-to-surface missiles
5. ZR -- Sborochn. tsentr zenitnykh raket -- Assembly center for surface-to-air missiles
6. 1st FTRB -- Frontovaya tylovaya raketnaya baza -- Front rear area missile base
7. 2nd FTRB
8. PBF* -- Peremeshchennaya baza fronta ( ) -- Transloading base of the front
9. S/S* -- Stantsiya snabzheniya -- Railhead
10. AK* -- Armeyskiy korpus -- Army corps
11. AK rezerv -- AK reserve
12. pd (rez.)* -- pekhotnaya diviziya (rezerv) -- Infantry division, reserve
13. brtd* -- bronetankovaya diviziya -- Armored division



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14. Blizhayshaya zadacha -- Immediate mission

15. Dalneyshaya zadacha -- Followup mission

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